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RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1682  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1759

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SIPDIS

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RIYADH, PLEASE PASS TO DHAHRAN; DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [KISL](#) [SA](#)

SUBJECT: MOSQUE SERMONS FOR SAUDI ARABIA: MT. ARAFAT DEC  
18, MECCA AND MEDINA DEC 7, 14, 21

1. (U) SUMMARY: The Grand Mufti gave a special sermon to pilgrims at Mount Arafat on December 18 denouncing terrorism and warning against the economic schemes of Islam's enemies. Sermons in Mecca's al-Haram Mosque on December 7, 14, and 21 elaborated on traditional issues such as piety in relation to the Hajj. Sermons in Medina's Nabawi Mosque during this period featured similar discussions of the pilgrimage, with the December 7 sermon also including a prayer to remove the "filth of Jews" from Al-Aqsa Mosque. END SUMMARY.

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MOUNT ARAFAT  
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2. (U) The Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah al Sheikh, gave a December 18 sermon from Namira Mosque at Mount Arafat, one of the required stops for the Hajj. The Mufti claimed that enemies are targeting the global Islamic community and "attempting to annex it to their economic system." He also said that these enemies were trying to spread disunity within the Islamic community, and that Muslims worldwide were being labeled as terrorists through no fault of their own. The Mufti said that all Muslims denounce acts of terrorism, and urged Muslim youths not to become tools for those seeking to create chaos within their countries.

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MECCA  
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3. (U) In Mecca's al-Haram Mosque on December 7, Sheikh Salih Bin-Abdallah Bin-Humayd urged piety and fidelity to God, and then discussed the importance of pilgrimage and the status of Mecca in Islam. In the December 14 sermon, Sheikh Usamah Khayyat stated that noble goals are the basis of success for any gathering, and then related this idea to the Hajj. On November 21, Sheikh Abd-al-Aziz al-Sudays talked about the end of the pilgrimage season, and urged pilgrims to "avoid doing anything that would disturb the purity of these great rituals." He closed by praying for victory for mujahidin "everywhere and in Palestine" and for the return of Al-Aqsa Mosque to Muslims. All three sermons closed by praying for God to defend Islam and to humiliate or destroy its enemies.

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MEDINA  
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4. (U) At Medina's Nabawi Mosque on December 7, Sheikh Salah

Al Budayr discussed the rituals of pilgrimage and God's rewards to pilgrims. He closed by asking God to "purge the Al-Aqsa Mosque from the filth of Jews." In his December 14 sermon, Sheikh Abd-al-Rahman al-Hudhayfi discussed the reward of paradise and the punishment of hell. In the sermon on December 21, Sheikh Abd-al-Bari al-Thubayti congratulated this year's pilgrims, and urged Muslims to continue doing good deeds and obeying God. All three sermons concluded by beseeching God to support Islam and to humiliate or destroy its enemies.

GFOELLER